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Circular for P&I Clubs

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Correspondents for:

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Venezuela's political developments

Yesterday, 23rd January, as widely reported by the international media, Venezuela was the scenario of massive demonstrations nationwide, a series of protest marches drawing hundreds of thousands of Venezuelans, on the anniversary of the 1958 Venezuelan coup d'état. The protest was a coordinated effort by the opposition to remove Mr. Nicolás Maduro from the presidency due to his widely criticised second term beginning and the ensuing presidential crisis.

The decision of US President Trump of recognizing Venezuelan opposition leader Juan Guaidó as the legitimate president of Venezuela was followed by Maduro's official breaking of diplomatic relations with the United States. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said the US will maintain diplomatic relations with Venezuela despite Maduro's order, and so confrontation between both countries are expected to escalate in the coming days. Further to the morning massive but pacific demonstrations the protests had continued during the night in many places across the country, particularly in Caracas, the capital city, but turned violent where at least 13 people were reported killed. Today protests have decreased and the situation has evolved into a tense calm awaiting for the upcoming events, in a round of consequences difficult to foresee at the moment.

On the other hand, despite the above difficult situation it must be said that the maritime field hasn't been affected so far, most port terminals are state-owned or managed by the government, commercial ports like Puerto Cabello are state-owned entities whose control have been given to the military authorities being that the main reason by which they are still

working normally, as a matter of fact the main port areas like Puerto Cabello, La Guaira, Amuay or Jose have not been affected much by the violent protests, which were mainly focused at the capital Caracas and other non-port cities.

The main issue has to do with the operational side, specially related to dry bulk cargoes, as the situation is affecting trucks availability so reducing the discharging rates to a minimum and increasing vessel's time at port. On the other side the main oil facilities at Maracaibo, Punta Cardon-Amuay and Jose Terminals are working normally as always. The protests and the tense situation generally speaking are disrupting communications and traveling in some places.

As a general advice we highly recommend that ship's crew take the necessary security steps, remaining on board at all times if possible. Close contact with agents and local correspondents is also advisable, to monitor and update the situation in a particular port or marine terminal. As this is a matter in motion the situation may change suddenly, and so we are monitoring developments to update it as it might be necessary.

Should you need any assistance or further information regarding the topic stated above, please feel free to contact:

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